

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

The attached sheet(s) of drawings includes changes to:

In Fig. 4, reference numeral --51-- has been added to indicate the pot.

Attachment: Replacement sheet

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3, and 8 are pending in the application. Claims 2, 4-7, and 9-17 have been canceled.

Specification and Claims

Minor changes have been made to the specification to place it in better form for U.S. practice.

Further, minor changes have been made to claim 1, without affecting the scope thereof, to place it in better form for U.S. practice.

Drawings

A minor change has been made to Fig. 4 so that it corresponds to the description in the specification.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to approve and enter this drawing change.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103

(a) Claims 1-7 and 9-17 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over McFadden (US 2004/0216732) in view of Lewis et al. (USP 2,719,211). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

In the Office Action, the Examiner alleges that McFadden discloses:

an upper jet hole (apertures 100a and 100b, Fig. 2) through which steam supplied and is jetted toward the food (Fig. 6a shows steam jetted toward the food product from upper apertures 100a and 100b); and

a side jet hole (29a and 29b, Fig. 2) that is provided in a side wall . . . of the heating chamber and through which steam supplied from the steam generating device is

jettied toward the food (Fig. 6a shows steam jettied toward the food product from lower apertures 29a and 29b).

Applicants respectfully disagree with the interpretation of the McFadden reference that “steam” is jettied toward the food from the apertures 100a, 100b, 29a, and 29b.

McFadden states:

In paragraph [0002], “this invention pertains to the art of cooking appliances and more particularly, to an oven for cooking a food product by air alone; or a combination of air and microwave energy;”

In paragraph [0015], “As water, for example is absorbed within these platters, microwave performance decreases because the microwave energy interacts or couples with the water molecules . . . thereby reducing the microwave energy available for cooking A food product cooked upon a water soaked platter will take longer to cook; and

In paragraph [0018], “This is important because grease, water vapor or other particulate contamination of the microwave waveguide causes premature failure of the magnetron (tube) used to generate the microwave energy or “e-field” within the oven cavity.

Further, although McFadden defines the “gas” used in his oven to be “air, nitrogen and other fluid mixtures that may be utilized within the cooking art” (see paragraphs [046] and [0064], there is no statement that the “gas” may be a steam.

In view of the foregoing disclosure, Applicants submit that McFadden’s has intended to use a gas such as heated air, nitrogen and other reasonable gasses, but not steam because it would interfere with the microwave energy. If steam is used as the “gas,” the oven would not function as intended by McFadden.

Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that McFadden fails to disclose or suggest the “steam generating device,” the “upper jet hole provided in a ceiling part of the heating chamber and through which steam supplied from the steam generating device is jetted toward the food,” and the “side jet hole provided in a side wall of the heating chamber and through which steam supplied from the steam generating device is jetted toward the food,” as required in claim 1.

The Examiner merely relies on the Lewis reference to show that providing an upper jet hole in a ceiling part of the heating chamber is known in the art.

In view of this, even assuming that McFadden and Lewis can be combined, which Applicants do not admit, one skilled in the art would, at best, merely modify the oven disclosed by McFadden by placing the upper apertures 100a and 100b to the ceiling, and would not conceive an oven that has the “steam generating device,” the “upper jet hole,” and the “side jet hole,” as recited in claim 1.

Moreover, according to McFadden, gas inside a heating chamber is sucked into a ceiling part of the heating chamber, where the gas is heated by heating means before it is then, through a detour outside the heating chamber, returned to the heating chamber. Here, since the entire amount of the gas heated by the heating means passes through the detour passage, a large amount of heat is lost before the gas returns to the heating chamber, resulting in poor heat efficiency.

By contrast, according to the claimed invention of the present application (claim 1), part of the stem heated by the heating means is, through a route with little loss of heat as just mentioned, jetted through upper jet holes onto food. This helps obtain high heat efficiency.

Lewis shares, with claim 1 of the present invention, the feature that upper holes are provided in a ceiling part of a heating chamber. However, Lewis has no heating means inside a

sub-cavity having those upper jet holes in its floor surface. Accordingly, here, it does not occur that steam heated by heating means inside a sub-cavity is, as soon as it is heated, jetted into a heating chamber to transfer heat to food. The same applies to the Shukla reference cited to reject claim 8.

Claims 2-7 and 9-17, variously dependent on claim 1, are allowable at least for their dependency on claim 1.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw this rejection.

(b) Claim 8 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over McFadden in view Shukla et al. (USP 4,951,648). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 8, dependent on claim 1, is allowable at least for its dependency on claim 1.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw this rejection.

Conclusion

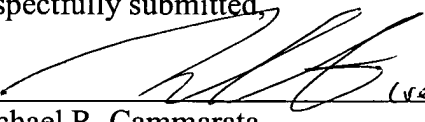
Accordingly, in view of the above amendments and remarks, reconsideration of the rejections and objections, and allowance of the pending claims are earnestly solicited.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Maki Hatsumi Reg. No. 40,417 at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37.C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

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Respectfully submitted,

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Attachments: Figure 4